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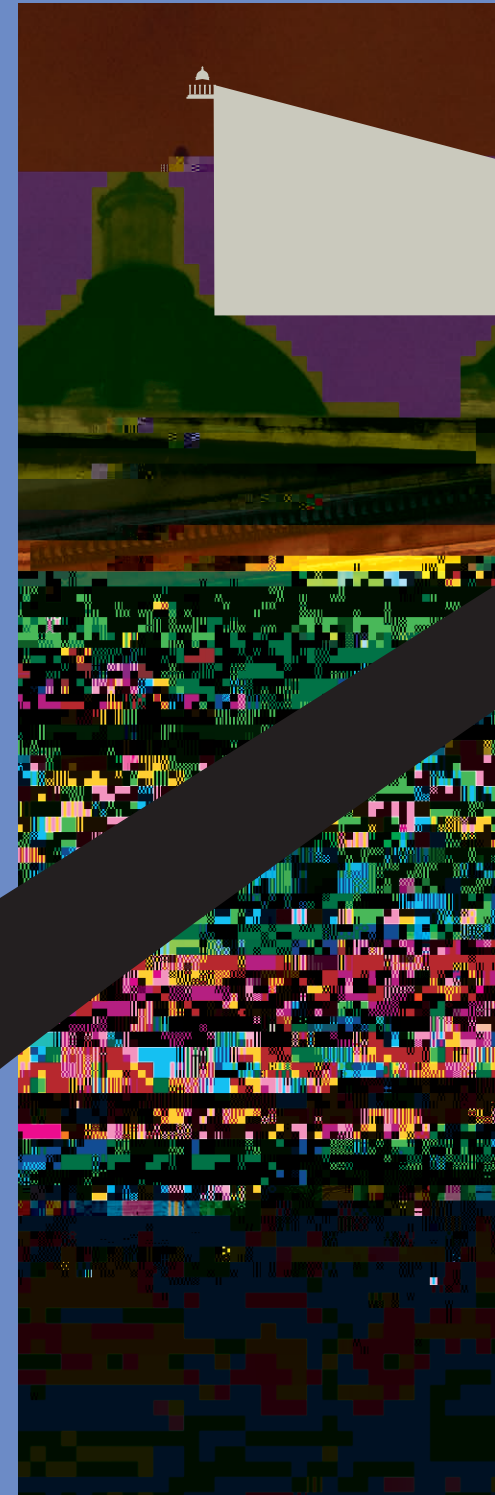
**Language, Identity and Serbian  
Diaspora Engagement**

The importance of language  
maintenance to Serbia and the UK Serb  
Diaspora.

**Charlotte Whelan**



**UCL**



# Language, Identity and Serbian Diaspora Engagement

The importance of language maintenance to Serbia and  
the UK Serb Diaspora

Charlotte Whelan

2012

This research dissertation is submitted for the MSc in  
Global Migration at University College London

Supervisor: Dr JoAnn McGregor



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## Introduction

Serbia has a large estimated Diaspora population (3.5 million) considering its home population size (7.5 million) (Lacroix and Vezzoli 2010) and this is further complicated by the numerous identity shifts these groups have experienced. Diaspora engagement with 'home' is significantly dependent on the context of departure and whether or not they intend to return. The Serbian government recognising the strength and need for engagement with these groups, the Serbian government established its own Ministry for Diaspora (MfD) in 2003 (Lacroix and Vezzoli 2010) that deals with everything from business and finance partnerships, to cultural and language exchanges. It is this latter set of initiatives that I will be examining.

The MfD announced the imminent launch of an online resource project entitled 'Every Serb Speaks Serbian' in January 2012 (Anonymous 2012) This was aimed at providing linguistic and cultural resources for institutions educating children in the Diaspora, covering language, history, and traditional and contemporary culture. At the time of writing, political developments in Serbia have meant that the MfD no longer exists in its original form, leaving the future of this and other engagement policies uncertain. It is therefore a unique point at which to examine the history of engagement between Serbia and its UK diaspora, and the difficulties this has entailed; but also language maintenance within this diaspora and the difficulties they have faced amongst themselves.

In examining diaspora engagement, there has been little attention paid to engagement between diasporas and home countries in a European context. Academic examinations of diaspora engagement have also tended to focus more on financial and political engagement, than cultural and linguistic cooperation. Finally, there seems to be a great deal of literature on diaspora engagement, and on language and identity but very little linking the two. I therefore aim to bridge this gap and investigate why culture and more specifically language maintenance is important to Serbs in the UK, why it is important for Serbia as a country, and where or whether these views overlap.

This dissertation aims to address these questions by examining language and identity in the context of the UK Serb diaspora. It will assess whether a desire to maintain these identities is context-dependent and how; explore the reasons why it is important to Serbia that the









absorption of the MfD into an office within the larger Department of Foreign Affairs, potentially indefinitely stalled. The Serbian government has, however, provided Summer schools in Serbia for children of the diaspora, and some educational resources to schools abroad (Lacroix & Vezzoli 2010). In terms of schools outside Serbia, the Ministry successfully co-financed the opening of Serbian language schools in the South African Republic, Switzerland, Albania, Macedonia, Slovenia, and Croatia. (Anonymous 2012: 11) The cost of land, materials, and teachers in most of these areas is significantly less than in the



are about 1,300 Serbian associations today across five continents (Lacroix & Vezzoli 2010: 12), and in London alone there are 25-30 000 Serbs and around 20 cultural associations (Stanojlovic 2010). There also exists inter-country coordination in various forms, such as the Serbian Unity Congress established in the USA in 1990 (Lacroix & Vezzoli 2010) and the 2006 assembly for Serbian organisations in Munich (Lacroix & Vezzoli 2010). This demonstrates a very large, structured and organised group that already works on the kinds of projects Serbia has engaged with. If there is a desire amongst these groups for recognition and assistance from Serbia then engagement policies would seem to be a positive progression in diaspora-homeland relations. There is a fear that attachment to home countries limits progress in host countries, but Vertovec (2006) argues that this is more a reflection of negative host country attitudes to diaspora and migrants in general.

Language and identity: the national context

first 'standardised' Serbo-Croat (Lampe 2000) but nobody agrees on whether this was ever a single language or equally, if there were ever three individual languages or just dialectal variants of the same (Greenberg 2004). There is an argument that Serbo-Croat always had a stronger identity outside of the former Yugoslavia (paraphrased Greenberg 2004: 17). In other words, non-Yugoslav countries recognised it more as an official language than the people living within these linguistic borders (Greenberg 2004). The collapse of the state in 1940 led to the fragmentation of a universal Serbo-Croat language, with a re-establishment shortly following the end of World War II (Greenberg 2004). The Novi Sad agreement of 1954 stated



and tensions around the terms Serb/Serbian. The latter signifies those from Serbia proper, whilst the former includes everyone else (Britti! 2011). When considering the fluidity of language and identity, differing dialects in the home countries are complex enough but once removed, there are two paths they can follow: 1) differences can become more heightened or exaggerated in the diaspora, or 2) they can slide away, allowing people to unite under a common linguistic and identity framework.

#### Language and identity: the personal context

On a personal level, language can be the primary signifier of who we are as people and who we align ourselves with into groups. (Joseph 2008: 45) is not simply important due to the historical and cultural markers it attributes, but also because of its role in defining the people it allows us to interact or identify with (Joseph 2008). Language and culture are ways for us to explain or justify difference that makes us uncomfortable, instead of discussing these differences on a deeper level (Anderson 2002). It can therefore be an alienating feature of identity, setting you apart from those around you (Anderson 2002) - a marker of 'foreignness' to some extent (Anderson 2002: 121).

There are values and meaning embedded in language (Bokhorst-Heng 1999) that, when living abroad, can serve as a foil or counterpoint to the English or Western values that many feel are corrupting their youth (Bokhorst-Heng 1999). Language use abroad can also form bonds between communities, and a barrier against perceived oppression or ostracisation from host societies (Hewitt 1992; Willis 2002). Some families in Bokhorst-Heng's (1999) study felt that submitting to a language other than your own leaves you culturally neither one thing nor the other. But as she and others observe, it more often than not makes you something new (Bokhorst-Heng 1999) - a 'hybrid' able to borrow from and understand all elements of your cultural make-up (Iyall Smith 2008). We can accept and interact with multiple languages and facets of identity so in compartmentalising, we display a limited knowledge of how they function (paraphrased Bokhorst-Heng 1999: 172).

Language is essential in maintaining family bonds, as many feel that these can never be strong where linguistic barriers exist (Bokhorst-Heng 1999). In multilingual households, the language children choose to communicate in can even be seen by parents as a personal

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<sup>5</sup>Bosnian Serb, Croatian Serb, British Serb

rejection or source of conflict in familial relationships (Anderson 2002). So it occupies no small space in terms of personal identity in diaspora communities. For children themselves, whilst potentially confusing, language or 'code-switching' is not as important as for their parents, especially in early life (Anderson 2002). They are quite often able to speak comfortably in all of their heritage languages but naturally choose to swap between the words available to them in each, in order to express themselves more fully (Swayne 2011). Swayne (2011) even cites code-switching as 'a form of mental exercise' that is good for brain function and development.

A key issue in terms of language and identity is that of identification versus ascription, the former being how you self-identify and the latter being an identity that is imposed on you by another person or group (Jenkins 1994). These can correlate or contradict official opinions on language, but in all cases can be subjective or manipulated (Greenberg 2004). Connected to this is the linguistic concept of familiarity, which 'involves drawing boundaries between what is within your comfort zone and what lies outside of that comfort zone' - just as with identity in general (Joseph 2008: 48). What we judge to be familiar is not necessarily linguistically the most similar (Joseph 2008) and in times of conflict, dialects become a key definer of identity, ethnicity and politics (Greenberg 2004) - nowhere more so than the



skills (Swayne 2011); it can help understanding other cultural differences (Iyall Smith 2008); and less abstractly, it can open up educational and employment opportunities by providing children with an additional skill. In bi- or multilingual households languages occupy different spaces and serve different functions. Bokhorst-Heng (1999) writes about the Singaporean context but the same can be said for other linguistic groups:

while English is for new knowledge, to support the development of a modern industrial nation, mother-tongue is for old knowledge, to keep the people anchored and focused amidst the changes around them. (p. 172)

So there is a belief that home country or additional family languages can allow you to stay grounded, or provide you with cultural traits and sensitivities that you might not otherwise be exposed to. Connected to this is the knowledge that social networks are important to language maintenance (Reynolds 2002). If you have no ties to your home country or people who speak its language, then there is little incentive to retain it. This demonstrates that the importance of language is not always as a personal, cultural identifier and can be linked to more practical everyday concerns.

## Methodology

My data was primarily gained through individual interviews, informal discussions and attendance at community events. I incorporated findings from an earlier survey conducted by Briti! Magazine (Smiljani!

Pavle	British born half Serb/halfGreek	<10	1	
Stevan	British born CroatianSerb	2 children <12	2	
Tanja	British born CroatianSerb	1<10	1	

I conducted my interviews utilising a pre-prepared question protocol and captured the

from Serbia proper. From meeting with parents at the Bedford school, I was able to gain not only data from Serbs of Croatian origin, but with some from the 1990s refugee group. This enabled me to investigate and compare the complex nature of identity in a situation where your nation-state is not actually your home country, with the groups that were Serbian from Serbia. With some interviews in this group and first generation migrants more generally, there were language issues. Whilst the level of English amongst respondents was high, some questions were misunderstood on a semantic level and my Serbian is not of an adequate level to explain. Some interviews may therefore have benefited from an interpreter or a higher level in my own linguistic skills.

By attending events and conducting some parental interviews at community schools, I was able to observe a more relaxed and informal side to participants and the community in general. I was also able to see how a few of the schools functioned, and how children

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and my own position as a researcher, but this is often the case in ethnographic and, more generally, qualitative research (Madison 2005). As arguments against realist assumptions of "knowing" a subject through this interactive approach state, it is important to acknowledge

## Findings: Chapter One

### The benefits and realities of linguistic engagement

In this opening chapter I will examine the practical motivations and benefits of language maintenance for both Serbia and its diaspora. I will do this by firstly<sup>15</sup> outlining the parameters of Serbian engagement with the UK on language issues so that the subsequent discussion of my findings makes sense, before moving on to discuss these benefits in more detail.

In terms of educational resources, there are multiple engagement routes between the UK and Serbia, of which the MfD and Ministry for Education are only a part. An interesting development since the start of my research is that the functions and functionaries of the MfD have completely altered following the Serbian elections in May, which dramatically reshaped the political landscape of the country.<sup>15</sup> Unfortunately, there is a great deal of opposition amongst the diaspora to the recently appointed head of the new and smaller office, Dubravka Filipovski (Briti! 2012c), which will undoubtedly affect future relations and existing engagement projects. At the time of interview however, representatives from the Diaspora Assembly (DA) maintained that this did not signify an end to engagement on language policies:

It doesn't stop our work and it doesn't stop our links to Serbia and its institutions. It just means that with a new government, with a new parliament, with the new ministries, we'll have to renew our efforts and contacts in order to understand who is the most appropriate to help out.<sup>16</sup>

An additional reason why changes to Serbian government do not overly affect engagement between the UK diaspora and Serbia are because it has never been the single, main organ through which these policies are shaped. The other major players are the Faculty of Philology at the University of Belgrade, Azbukum<sup>17</sup> in Novi Sad and the Serbian Orthodox Church. The first two are in a unique position to assist with diaspora education - the former because of its

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<sup>15</sup> Interview: Milos Stefanovic, UK representative to the Diaspora Assembly, 07/08/2012

<sup>16</sup> Interview: Milos Stefanovic, UK representative to the Diaspora Assembly, 07/08/2012

<sup>17</sup> Abukum is a Serbian language school in Serbia, established to teach Serbian as a foreign language to the significant number of ethnic minorities in the Novi Sad region.

ÒSerbian as a Foreign LanguageÓ (SFL) department, the latter due to its extensive experience



whether this comes from Serbia, the UK or both. However, the UK diaspora is being shrewd because rather than hoping that one or both of these plans will work out, they are proactively formulating the syllabus and exams so that even if formal recognition cannot be granted, they have a structured programme that parents will have confidence in based on the GCSE, even if the name is different. This is an important project because currently the standard is felt to not be universally good enough<sup>24</sup>By bringing together highly qualified teachers within the Serb diaspora, they can help to address this issue.

The rewards of investment in these projects for Serbia are numerous. Through a combination of improved diaspora linguistic comprehension and advances in communication technology, Serbia could draw on the experience, expertise and financial success of its diaspora; but they (currently) have a language barrier<sup>25</sup> that needs to be crossed. Remittances contribute significantly to Gross Domestic Product (Lacroix and Vezzoli 2010), and there is a general willingness amongst the diaspora to contribute to the future development and prosperity of Serbia. Considering this and the low cost of existing plans, language policies would seem like a sound investment for the government; and improvements in communication technology drive these costs down even further. Bearing this in mind, Filipović and Putnik (2010) argue that Serbia should establish a 'Diaspora University':

Diaspora University is not necessarily a university as we know it but rather an emergent property of networking of experts in diaspora, across disciplines, across institutional, cultural or national borders. (p. 74)

Through online coordination between Serbian Universities, businesses, and their diaspora equivalents, there can be a mutually reinforcing framework designed to enhance the transformation of brain drain into brain gain through brain chain (networks).<sup>26</sup> (Filipović and Putnik 2010: 77) Considering the significant scale of 'brain drain' in Serbia, something it would benefit greatly from. The Jamaican Diaspora Foundation operates under a similar system through a diaspora skills database, cataloguing skills of diaspora members

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<sup>24</sup>Interview: Marta (teacher) 31/05/2012"

<sup>25</sup>Interview: Mirjana Lazl, UK representative to the Ministry for Diaspora 13/07/2012

<sup>26</sup>"Cited, for example, by Milos Stefanovic, UK representative to the Diaspora Assembly, 07/08/2012 and Darko (teacher) 28/05/2012

interested in giving back to Jamaica.Ó (Merz 2007: p. 201) Jamaica however does not have to cope with the same level of linguistic barriers between home country and diaspora as Serbia because the official language of Jamaica is English. Before Serbia could think to initiate such a project, there would have to be some kind of investment in raising linguistic standards.

The Ódiaspora is not only an unexploited national resourceÉ (but also represents) marginalised constituenciesÓ in many cases (Filipovi! and Putnik 2010: 72). This was noted in relation to the lack of UK recognition in terms of reinstating the Serbian GCSE and A-Level exams, as it was felt that many Serb students, like other minority language communities, were at a disadvantage and this would help them to gain confidence and additional qualifications<sup>27</sup>. Serbian recognition would also help to alleviate any sense of marginalization, due to the symbolic gesture of celebration and inclusion of the diaspora in the countryÓs future. With the recent political developments in Serbia, the progression of this recognition is uncertain but the UK

There are many practical motivations for language maintenance for the diaspora as well as for Serbia itself. Outside of familial relations, the main benefits cited were that it provides cultural grounding in today's globalised, Westernised world; it helps with understanding and contributing to multiculturalism; it can act as a protective barrier from social exclusion at home and abroad; and it can help with education and employment. In terms of cultural heritage,

language is a way of passing on identity, cultural codes, local values – some of which are the same worldwide but some are very specifically Serbian and important.

So it is felt that through language, as noted by Bockhorst-Heng (1999), you can access a different set of values that can be added to Western, or in this case British ones. Many minority language communities feel that the dominant culture has moved away from valuing and respecting family and the home, and that by maintaining their own language alongside the more positive elements of British society, they can maintain a more traditional culture in the space of the home. From a literal point of view, the 'ethnosemiotics' (Schubert 1995) of Serbian language can be seen in the importance attached to words for home and family. Their frequency and adaptability demonstrates the position these things hold in Serbian<sup>30</sup> culture. 'Ethnosemiotics' can be described as the process of not only recognising patterns of signs in language and culture, but of encoding and decoding (these) signs. (Schubert 1995: 91) The recurring themes of family and home in Serbian can therefore add to the feeling that as well as deterioration in family relationships, language loss can lead to a potential loss of family values. (Mills 2005: 267) As Schubert (1995: 91) notes: 'One of the most important mechanisms of culture is the production of codes' and identification with culture is dependent on the incorporation of these codes into a 'narrative of belongingness.' (Anthias 2001: 622)

The benefits of language to living in a multicultural society were raised frequently in interviews. It was felt that there was an opportunity in the UK to share cultures that in many

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<sup>#</sup> Interview: Marina Markovl, Serbian Embassy 01/06/2012

<sup>\$</sup> Interview: Olga Stanojlovi, Serbian Council 2/06/2012

places, Serbia included, there was not; but the only way to participate in this exchange was to connect with all aspects of your own culture:

London is so multicultural, and we have to live with and understand each other. But if you don't know your own culture, you can't understand<sup>31</sup> others.

This is because by engaging with the idea of being in some way 'Other', you are better placed to understand other people's experiences. Hybridity allows you to fit into multiple spaces and contexts by providing you with 'the ability to negotiate across barriers.' (Iyall Smith 2008: 4) However, Anthias (2001) questions this overly celebratory image of globalisation and hybridity, as the translation skills and other benefits are not universally available (paraphrased Anthias 2001: 637). What's more, there is a 'post-modern emphasis on difference and identity' rather than practical concerns like equality and inclusion (Anthias 2001: 638). Language in many ways can and does bridge the two, due to all of the other practical benefits discussed in this chapter. There was some debate over how the UK Serb diaspora was or should contribute to multiculturalism. For many, community traditions were felt to be outdated, and the diaspora should focus on more contemporary, hybrid<sup>32</sup> cultures; whereas others felt there was a need to focus on tradition and heritage culture because that is what they are losing, along with the language<sup>33</sup>. This is not, however, a new dilemma:

One complaint we always made as kids was that we were trying to live and behave in a Serbian society that was sort of from the 1930s, which was the last time they (his parents) were there. So they come over, and they do things – they promote Serbian culture but it's not present day Serbian culture.<sup>34</sup>

Pavle is a second generation British Serb. His father and the community he was raised in were from the first wave of migration at the end of the Second World War, and Pavle felt that by embracing the Serbian culture they had grown up around, they were actually in a way

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<sup>31</sup> "Interview: Danica (teacher) 04/06/2012

<sup>32</sup> Interview c

distancing themselves from Serbia itself. This is not surprising given this group's political views,<sup>35</sup> but these are the traditions that have been continued down the generations and represent the 'living in a time warp' dangers inherent in over-diasporisation, highlighted by Anthias (2001: 628).

When discussing social exclusion, it was felt that Serbian language could act as a protective barrier for children. In the UK, it allowed them to access a community in which there would be no prejudice towards their 'foreignness'. Through the social aspect of language learning they would also get to know that there are other people like (them) 'who share the same or similar background'.<sup>36</sup> But social exclusion was an issue within the community as well, and more specifically when placed back in a Serbian-speaking country. It was felt that there was only so far you could go in convincing people back 'home' of your Serb identity without the

Again, this feeds into linguistic theories, such as Anderson's (2002: 121), that language can act as a marker of 'foreignness.' By providing their children with Serbian linguistic tools, parents feel they are protecting them from being 'foreign' to any of their 'home' identities. The migration patterns caused by wars and long-term economic crisis have meant that a lot of the life trajectories within families have become so diverse that the only thing that binds them is Serbian language. It therefore acts as the catalyst and key definer of ~~border~~ groups and interactions (Joseph 2008) in many Serb diaspora cases, and it would be useful if there were universal access to a certain standard of education in Serbian language for diaspora communities to strengthen these ties.

A final and very important set of benefits in embracing a hybrid identity through language

more confident and much more sure they can say what they can say. She took Russian for A level which is usually not something advisable for the medicine because for the medicine you have to have maths, physics, chemistry and biology. But instead of physics, she took Russian literature. But when she went for interview, the professor (was) much more interested in Russian than biology or chemistry. It's something different and nowadays they're looking for something more you can offer.<sup>42</sup>

The case of Danica's daughter highlights almost all of the key benefits in language, and specifically Serbian language acquisition in the diaspora, because it has helped her both in her chosen career and in gaining a place to study for this career. Danica does, however, admit that it is only a benefit amongst the more generally ambitious. In other words, additional language skills are not the only key to success but in many fields they can significantly assist you in achieving it.

All of the above demonstrates the importance of language to the UK Serb diaspora, and the practical benefits of engagement around language to both Serbia and its diaspora. With the large-scale exit of highly skilled citizens from Serbia for decades, and its considerable economic and development issues, investment in linguistic improvement amongst these groups would see significant returns. For diaspora members equally, the ability to speak an additional language not only helps to maintain and develop a connection to their 'home' identity, but also provides them with a life skill that can benefit them in their new 'host' society.

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<sup>42</sup>Interview: Danica (teacher) 04/06/2012

## Findings: Chapter Two

### Heterogeneity in the UK Serb diaspora and its implications for linguistic cooperation

This chapter will examine the more emotional elements of engagement and the ability of language to overcome personal differences. The diversity of the UK Serb diaspora significantly impacts the practicalities and possibilities of engagement on language policies, and relationships with Serbia itself. But all differences aside, interviews showed that language, and connecting children to family culture and history was an important area for union.

In reference to the diaspora, 'two Serbs, three opinions' is a phrase I heard often in my research; and very accurately encapsulates the diversity in both the diaspora and their responses to questions on language, identity and Serbia. Combined with the personal differences that make language teaching difficult – where people are from, what they consider the language, politics and faith of identity to be – are the practical ones – children of differing levels all in the same class due to shortage of schools and funds. The two main differentiations that came out of my research were between religious and secular community members; and Serbia- or ex-Yugoslavia-born parents, and British Serb parents. The first category of difference relates practically to engagement with Serbia and the structuring of a universal language programme for diaspora Serbs. As mentioned previously, the church school represented the most favourable conditions for the establishment of an official supplementary school in the UK however, they opted out. This has upset some members of the community involved in language instruction but equally, there are some parents who would never even consider sending their children to a church affiliated school:

They do lessons at the church and I don't want them learning all of that stuff. It's not just the religion they teach them, they teach a lot about the Chetnik way of life and that whole royalist thing and I'm not having it. They can learn that for themselves later. In a more balanced context. Not the way they're going to be taught there.<sup>43</sup>

Regardless of whether or not this opinion is correct, it would significantly impact the results of making the designated school church-based and highlight the establishment of distrust amongst some members of the diaspora, related to the various migration waves from Serbia or ex-

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Yugoslavia to the UK. Branka (quoted above) is the child of Yugoslav economic migrants and was brought up identifying with a Yugoslav rather than a royalist or traditionalist mindset, which given its equal status as outcast under the Tito regime became closely tied with the Serbian Orthodox Church. There is a strong belief amongst many members of the Serb diaspora that religion and education should not <sup>44</sup>mix. However this is complex, as many community languages are tied to religious institutions or values (Harris et al 2002; Warner and Wittner 1998). This is usually because religious spaces are the most visible community institutions and have a wider support network through their global religious diasporas (Levitt 2004). Serbia is a relatively small country but the Serbian Orthodox Church has branches around the world due to the large Serb diaspora.<sup>45</sup>

Amongst the more Yugoslav objections to church instruction is the desire to move away from what many view as a closed avenue of instruction. Even those who are religious acknowledge the importance of finding a more universal and open means of accessing a 'Serb' identity.<sup>46</sup>

dependent on who was in charge at any given time<sup>48</sup> as Levitt (2008: 774) states, it is important to distinguish between the public politics of religious communities and what its individual members believe. The church may be seen as a closed community due to its Orthodox focus but individual members, especially in the language school, may be more open to difference and cooperation. However, in teaching language the reverse is true for both sides – individual beliefs have to be set aside if a coherent programme and policy for language instruction amongst the British Serb diaspora is to be achieved.

Many Yugoslav, or children of Yugoslav migrants spoke fondly of the height of diaspora engagement during this period. There was more money, which translated into officially recognised schools that followed the same curriculum as schools in Yugoslavia. However, some church affiliated people had other opinions of what diaspora engagement meant under Tito's rule:

They didn't have a Ministry for Diaspora before. They just had agents they sent to kill people outside the country. They used to kill so many people – and a church in those days would be looked upon like an enemy of the country.<sup>49</sup>

Differing views on historical engagement by no means represent a fundamental contemporary rift, as Yugoslavia no longer exists so the difference of opinion is not related to the current state of affairs. It does mean that the church has a long history of organising itself and that there are a strong number of diaspora members who look to it as their primary source of support. This is not surprising as religion often influences how rooted people are in host countries (Levitt 2008), and acts as a meeting point for diaspora members where they can find information about practical life issues as well as spiritual guidance (Levitt 2008). With already the largest Serbian language school in the UK, the church sees its main links for improving diaspora education as coming from pre-existing religious networks<sup>50</sup>. This does not exclude cooperation with the broader working group on language in the UK but it has given them more freedom than other parties to pull out; highlighting the key issue in

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<sup>48</sup> Interview: Danica (teacher) 04/06/2012

<sup>49</sup> Interview: Danica (teacher) 04/06/2012

<sup>50</sup> Interview: Father Dragana Lazic, Head of the Serbian Orthodox Church in London, 20/07/2012

organising around language instruction in the Serb diaspora, which is that everyone has a common goal in wanting to improve the availability and quality of Serbian language instruction but nobody agrees on how it can be achieved. The church was receptive to Serbia's newfound but temporary willingness to help, yet ultimately opted out of its scheme and still values religious over secular routes of engagement. This decision is contradicted in Serbian Orthodox churches in other countries. South Africa, for example, saw the establishment of the first MfD recognised supplementary school based in an existing church school in 2009 (Ministry of Religion and Diaspora 2009). Equally, some secular people would like an officially recognised supplementary school but would be hesitant about it existing within a religious space, even if this were the most feasible option.

All of the above can be linked back to academic ideas on membership groups and what these are based on (Lacroix & Vezzoli 2010). Although most respondents were proudly Serb, what this meant to each was highly complex. It is certainly not a collective national identity because many people in the Serb diaspora define themselves as Yugoslav, or are Bosnian or Croatian Serbs. Due to the events of the 1990s, national boundaries for Croatian Serbs were complicated further:

(I)t's a post-war kind of Croatia that I think their relationship towards is really funny. And they find it kind of difficult to attach their kids to that because then kids see Serbia as their homeland, which is not the homeland of their parents – it's really funny. I mean it's not funny, just complex, you know, in the sense of migration.

In Croatia, many Serb homesteads were eradicated in the mid-1990s during Operation Storm (Glenny 1996), when Croats began taking back Serb-controlled areas and the Serbs in these areas were forced to leave, and many massacred on exodus (Glenny 1996). This is not to say that there are no Serbs living in Croatia again now but their location and general demography has shifted dramatically. So Croatian Serbs to a large extent exist within Sheffer's (2003: 73) 'State-less' diaspora category because although they feel a connection to Serbia, it is not their home country. The redrawing of borders in Bosnia and Herzegovina had similarly complicating results for Bosnian Serbs. Orientation to a 'homeland' is therefore complex for the broad 'Serb' ethnic group, but orientation to the language is also, through exile and inclusion within the wider Serb community, it has not been too difficult to transfer a

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<sup>&1</sup>"Interview: Marta (teacher) 31/05/2012"



how it was maintained. Language was seen as integral to family connections but this was dependent on first or second-generation status, and also the broader familial context and duration of time in the UK. For first generation Serbs, it was felt that it would be "unnatural" to speak to their child in a language other than Serbian: "It's my mother tongue, it's the language I dream in, think in, feel most comfortable in" (this illustrates Greenberg (2004) and Joseph's (2008) points about language defining social groups and the people we feel comfortable with. Regardless of fluency in other languages, the mother tongue will always be the most comfortable form of communication for any person. In a similar way, family is the group that we generally feel most comfortable with in terms of our ability to express ourselves openly in their company. It is therefore logical to assume that it would be strange, although by no means impossible, to have a strong familial bond without a linguistic connection (Bockhorst-Heng 1999).

Some parents even expressed a degree of hurt when their children opt to speak English to each other, viewing it as almost personal rejection (supportive findings in Anderson 2002). Amongst second-generation Serbs, there was a personal attachment to their own understanding, or lack of, which they carried over to their children. In other words, some felt regret at not having learnt correctly themselves and therefore wanted their children to learn formally.<sup>56</sup> Others enjoyed their learning experience so much that they wanted to share it with their children.<sup>57</sup> There was an element of this amongst first generation migrants too, as sending children to Serbian language school was viewed as a form of shared experience through recreating the Serbian classroom in a UK environment.<sup>58</sup> This is due in part to a sense of alienation from the British education system and a desire to continue familial and cultural narratives of identity (Ali 2003).

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<sup>56</sup> This was a hypothetical response from Marina Markovic of the Serbian Embassy preceded by: "I cannot speak from personal experience but I know that if I had a child, it would be absolutely essential for the child to learn Serbian because otherwise it wouldn't fully understand me, my background, a key side of my cultural identity. I would not want to talk to my child in English. It wouldn't be natural. That child would be my family and my family language is Serbian."

<sup>57</sup> Interview citations include (parents) Branka 26/05/2012 and Tanja and Pavle 17/06/2012

<sup>58</sup> Interview citations include Aleksandar (parent) 26/05/2012

<sup>59</sup> Interview: Marta (teacher) 31/05/2012"

Personal circumstances<sup>59</sup> were also seen as a significant obstacle to language maintenance in the diaspora but this is why it is felt that teaching is so vital to the continuation of the community. Some viewed circumstances as a reason to let go, others saw them as further motivation to place their children under formal language instruction. Even amongst first-

exams for Serbian, might have more benefits for the former. This is contradicted by official Ministry reporting on previous language support projects in South Africa (Ministry of Diaspora and Religion 2009). The assistant Minister at the time - Vukman Krivokuća stated that

preservation of É national identity through Serbian language learning is very important, especially for the third generation diaspora in their attempt to establish partnerships with the homeland and maintain national affiliation. (Ministry of Diaspora and Religion 2009)







the above is that the British Serb diaspora fits the theory that identities in diasporas can create not only hybrid individuals, but "hybrid diasporas" (Werbner 2002 in Mills 2005: 261). This makes the creation of language policies complex but by no means impossible.

## Findings: Chapter Three

### Language and visibility in the diaspora

My final chapter will examine ideas of (in)visible diasporas and the role language can play in asserting and strengthening identity. It was strongly felt amongst respondents that language was the primary way of reasserting and redefining a Serb identity in the face of ever-increasing assimilation. As the single universal identifier of said identity, it at the very least represents a means of accessing the various forms of Serb culture.

Many minority ethnic groups<sup>73</sup> feel the threat of heritage loss and community erosion, but for Serbs it seemed of particular concern due to their status as a largely 'invisible other'. They recognised the positives in this but regretted the significant cost. Language



and Reynolds (2002) outlines 3 levels of ties within them: 'exchange' defines your close ties; 'interactive' refers to the frequency of encounters; and 'passive' is used to define long distance or infrequent ties (Reynolds 2002: p. 146) Who falls into which category can significantly affect language maintenance (Reynolds 2002). The same is true of all linguistic diaspora communities throughout the world, including the Serbs. This is why expanding the networks in which Serbian is spoken for a child ensures a deeper linguistic tie and stronger maintenance in the long-term. Connected to the maintenance of culture and social networks is the issue of mixed marriages. Traditionally, Serbs married within the community & not always, but often. Now there is ~~not~~ much opportunity to do so. It was religious, early wave respondents who observed this and perhaps the development is therefore a reflection of the more secular views of the later Yugoslav and post-Yugoslav migrants. Mixed marriages are on the increase but from speaking to various parents and teachers, this could be a positive development in terms of language learning ~~as~~, because adult learning of Serbian has increased and in many cases, the non-Serb parent takes more interest in the children's language instruction than the Serb parent.

The dominance of English is an obvious and in many cases accepted feature of UK diaspora life. Along with resourcing difficulties, it was cited as the primary obstruction to Serbian language acquisition. This is due to the obvious reason of it being the primary language outside of the familial context but also because there is pressure on all minority language communities to use English, which spills over into the private domain as a marker of commitment to 'Britishness' (paraphrased Mills 2005: 254). There is a perception of minority languages as 'anti-modern' (paraphrased Mills 2005: 255) and therefore ostracised, which is acknowledged by members of the Serbian working group acting to get recognition of a syllabus for GCSE and A-Level:

I think there's almost indirect discrimination against community languages because the awarding bodies are commercial organisations and obviously it's expensive to set up a new exam, and it's not feasible in commercial terms to set up a community language as a new exam because the demand isn't big enough. I just got a letter from AQA saying that they would need to see in the first year 16 000 entries and then in

subsequent years 3000 ... Now to me, that means that no community language will ever meet those criteria so it means there can never be a qualification for a community language.<sup>80</sup>

The working group is part of the Serbian Council, an organisation set up to promote Serb culture and rights within the UK. Serbian language has been identified as an important right whose needs are not being met, supporting arguments that a key method of expressing identity (Hewitt 1992). As community coherence increases, so too does the desire for linguistic rights (paraphrased Hewitt 1992: 188). In other words, as the Serbian community grows in size and/or coordination, its desire and ability to campaign for its rights and of which language plays a significant part becomes greater. A GCSE and A-Level programme may not be seen as a 'right' but it is felt that the British education system is placing unreasonable expectations on Serbian and other minority community languages. However, it was largely felt that this should be a motivation factor to increase language learning and use at home, whilst it has currently bred an apathetic attitude amongst the UK Serb diaspora. It also lowers the expectations of parents as we progress further down the generations. Most second-generation Serbs interviewed did not expect their children to be fluent. This is not necessarily a bad thing but officials and teachers believe that it is possible for anyone to achieve fluency with the right amount of motivation and effort from both sides.<sup>81</sup> It is hoped that the GCSE and A-Level campaign will challenge apathetic attitudes to language learning.

There were many comparisons made with other diaspora communities during the course of my interviews. The three most common were Polish, Greek Orthodox and Jewish. It was felt that all three of these managed to maintain identity in their communities better than the Serbs. According to interviewees, other Orthodox communities receive more financial support from their governments<sup>82</sup>, which is why they have been able to set up more official schools and community institutions. With Jewish and Polish communities in the UK, it was simply felt that they had an admirable dedication to their culture that, in the former case especially, was able to exist more comfortably alongside a British identity:

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<sup>80</sup> "Interview: Olga Stanojlović, Serbian Council 2/06/2012

<sup>81</sup> "Interview citations include Olga Stanojlović, Serbian Council 2/06/2012 and Marta (teacher) 30/05/2012

<sup>82</sup> "Although with Greece, I am unsure of how true this would be now



my interviews, that the Serb diaspora has experienced; and as Goffman (1963: 68) states: 'The decoding capacity of the audience must be specified before one can speak of visibility.' People are very conscious of Jewish, Polish and to a lesser extent Greek communities; and the first two have experienced a great deal of discrimination on racial or religious grounds. Most British people are unaware of Serb communities and if they have been victimised, it would probably be as part of the broader 'Eastern European' group. Adorno and Horkheimer (2007) argue that a problem specific to the Jewish situation is that they are a target of extreme racism because they are neither different nor the same. Jews' status as an indefinable race creates many problems, as how can the term 'Jewish' be explained? Sander L. Gilman (2007: 295) states that 'race is a constructed category of social organisation as much as it is a reflection of some biological reality.' Whilst Matthew F. Jacobson (2007) believes that it is not as simple as questioning whether or not Jews fit in racially with their, historically white, countrymen; but rather 'what have been the historical terms of their probationary whiteness?' (Jacobson 2007: 306) In other words, racial separateness becomes more apparent during times of discrimination on other grounds.

British Serbs share a similar experience of being simultaneously the same and 'Other', albeit in a less overtly attacked way; and the idea of 'probationary whiteness' (Jacobson 2007: 306) is certainly something that could be discussed in relation to the perceptions and representations of the wars in the 1990s. This global, political prejudice was something that they could unite around:

I think everyone feels there is a sense of unity because of everything that's unfolded. And a reasonably strong sense of injustice as to what's happened to Serbia and the portrayal of the crisis. So I think a lot of people feel aggrieved and feel at the same time togetherness as a result of that.

This fits theories that displacement and prejudice lead to stronger attachments to a homeland and a sense of global community (paraphrased Weiner and Richard's 2008: 113), which could counteract the disunity and lack of a common Serb identity to a certain extent. Being a largely invisible community, it is not that Serbs experienced direct prejudice themselves – although perhaps at the time they did – but a wider sense of injustice was felt in relation to

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## Conclusion

This dissertation has built on and linked existing work on diaspora engagement, and language and identity through an examination of the UK Serb diaspora. A broad cross-section of interviews demonstrated that language was central to the Serb identity regardless of contextual differences amongst the diaspora; but that these contextual differences have practical implications in terms of language policies and engagement more generally. It has also highlighted the fragility of official diaspora engagement policies with Serbia, as most believe that the government lacks the funds, organisation and in some cases honesty to do so effectively.

Chapter One examined the practical motivations and benefits of language maintenance for both Serbia and its diaspora; and the current parameters of Serbian engagement with the UK on language policies. With the large-scale exit of highly skilled citizens from Serbia for decades and its considerable economic and development issues, investment in linguistic improvement amongst diaspora groups would reap significant returns. For diaspora members equally, hybridity and the ability to speak an additional language not only helps them to maintain and develop a connection to their 'home identity', but provides them with a life skill that can benefit them in their new 'host society' too.

I moved on to explore more emotional elements of engagement in Chapter Two, and the ability of language to overcome personal differences. The diversity of the UK Serb diaspora significantly impacts the practicalities and possibilities of engagement on language policies, and the relationship with Serbia itself; but all differences aside, interviews showed that language, and connecting children to family culture and history was an important area for union. The diaspora is suspicious of Serbia's ability and not its motivations for engagement; but it would like to feel that its symbolic relationship with Serbia is strengthening. Overall the findings of this chapter demonstrated that despite significant differences, the ability to engage with Serbia and a 'Serb' identity was a strong motivation for linguistic improvement.

My final chapter examined ideas of (in)visible diasporas and the role language can play in asserting and strengthening identity. It was strongly felt amongst respondents that language was the primary way of reasserting and redefining a Serb identity in the face of ever-

increasing assimilation. As the single universal identifier of said identity, it at the very least represents a means of accessing the various forms of Serb culture. There still exists a dichotomy in the Serb diaspora between maintaining their own community quietly and wanting to promote the positive Serb cultural elements to the wider UK society. This political interest is what makes language comprehension amongst the diaspora even more important, as it is essential to democratic processes (Wright 2000). Continued diaspora connection therefore requires continued or even improved linguistic comprehension (Wright 2000).

In sum, despite the diversity and distribution of the Serb diaspora in the UK, there remain many common goals that unite members. These are to improve linguistic standards amongst British Serbs, to strengthen relationships with Serbia, and to help promote a more positive view of Serbia and its people amongst non-Serb communities. Language is seen as the common thread that binds these things, therefore highlighting its centrality to identity and engagement. Serbia itself is at a crossroads in its relationship with the diaspora and the future of engagement in an official capacity remains uncertain. The benefits of such engagement are undeniable but the lack of commitment to these projects underlines the autonomy and

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## Initial Proposal 27/02/2012

### An examination of contemporary Serbian diaspora engagement

#### Introduction

Serbia has a large estimated diaspora population (3.5 million) considering its home population size (7.5 million) (Lacroix and Vezzoli 2010: p. 10) and this is also complicated by the numerous identity shifts these groups have experienced. Community organisations abroad have gone from 'Yugoslav' to 'Croatian', 'Serbian', 'Bosnian' etc. Of course, there have always been these specific categories within the broader Yugoslav identity but their importance has shifted with events back 'home'. The Serbian government recognised the strength and need for engagement with these groups abroad, and established its own Ministry for Diaspora in 2003 (Lacroix and Vezzoli 2010: p. 19) that deals with everything from business and finance partnerships, to cultural and media exchanges. It is this latter set of initiatives that I would like to investigate further.

It is about to launch an online resource project entitled 'Every Serb Speaks Serbian', which is aimed at providing language and cultural resources for institutions educating children of the diaspora (in relation to things about history, traditional and contemporary culture etc.). There is currently funding for Serbian language schools (for the diaspora) abroad and summer schools in Serbia, so this project will add to an already quite developed system. There are also specific cultural policies to fund, promote and include diaspora in cultural/artistic engagement e.g. screenings of films from the Yugoslav National Film Archives to international diaspora community groups, and Ministry support for diaspora films like 'Here and There'. This is not the only Serbian institution getting involved - Telekom Srbija, the largest telecommunications firm in the region, is launching an online entertainment service exclusively for diaspora communities to make them more 'connected' to culture and events in Serbia.

The value of this research is that in examining diaspora engagement policies, there has been a great deal of focus on developing countries in the global south and little attention paid to those in the European context. Added to this is Serbia's current position within Europe -



still bidding for EU accession and now for Belgrade to be the Capital of Culture 2020. It is really pushing for an image change and, arguably, diaspora engagement plays a strong role in this. The former Yugoslav countries present a relatively unique example too, as at one point the diaspora would have been unified under the 'Yugoslav' label, which has subsequently broken off into different community organisations. Finally, given the time that has passed since the wars and the shift from a 'Yugoslav' to 'Serbian' identity, it would be interesting to examine how the most recent wave of migrants and their children relate to this latter identity and the government's attempts to strengthen it.

#### Aims, objectives and research questions

- ¥ To examine the form, aims and focus of contemporary Serbian diaspora engagement
- ¥ To assess the extent to which it has changed and what has caused this shift - both ideologically and technologically
- ¥ To examine (mainly the UK Serbian) diaspora responses to these programmes
- ¥ What model of citizenship does Serbian diaspora engagement follow? Ethnic/Open etc.
- ¥ What is Serbia's view of its diaspora? Has it changed?
- ¥ Who is it engaging? i.e. is it maybe only reaching the people who were already engaged

Perhaps due to improved communication technology and its pivotal role in diaspora engagement, a comparison group either in a non-EU country (the US) or the largest EU community (Germany) could be made. However, Germany would present problems on two

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## Auto-critique

The final project did not differ considerably from my initial proposal. The only significant changes were that it focused slightly more on the diaspora than on policies coming from Serbia itself due to the nature of engagement between the two; and language became the main focus over other cultural engagement policies because I needed to narrow-down my scope, and it stood out as a unique and symbolic core of engagement.

I learnt fairly early on that language policies for the Serb diaspora in the UK were mainly developing from within the diaspora community. This is why there was not a great deal of information available online or in written form from the Serbian MfD. My reliance for more structural information on language projects was therefore mostly on my interviews, which did include Embassy officials, and those working with the Diaspora Assembly and the now non-operational MfD. The absorption of the MfD into the larger Office of Foreign Affairs was clearly a significant turning point in my research. However, knowledge of the instabilities inherent in the Serbian political and economic system, and the history of engagement thus far had already changed the direction of my project. I was therefore prepared for a development of this sort and in many ways it contributed well to my examination of the practical issues of engagement between Serbia and its diaspora.

Methodologically I expanded my research outside of the London focus, but the Bedford comparison group was invaluable. I did not however, attend as many events as I would have liked. Although not directly related to my research, the insight into the community obtained through informal interactions was significant. With more time, the project may also have benefited from speaking to newer generations of migrants and those who speak English to their children. However, it would be difficult to know how the recruitment of this latter group could be achieved. Most first generation Serbs do speak Serbian at home so finding those who do not would probably be a matter of luck. Overall, I stuck to my schedule extremely well. Some parts ran over but some were completed ahead of time, therefore balancing each other out. Certain interviewees were difficult to set a date with, however this is to be expected with any research project because people lead busy lives. I only allowed reasonable run-over time for interviews with key figures in the community that I knew were essential to my research. Otherwise I was strict with my cut-off date of the beginning of July. The Serb community proved extremely helpful and I unfortunately had more offers for interviews than

I had time to complete. Therefore again, more time may have allowed for more richness and depth of data by allowing me to accept all of these interview invitations.

## Appendix

Sample teaching materials

Information sheet

Interview protocols

Transcription extract

Participant tables

Transcription codes

Figures 1 and 2: The first bilingual Orthodox magazine for children that the Church of St Sava School is going to introduce as a teaching resource.

Figure 3: Participant information sheet (Printed on UCL Geography Department paper)

Language, identity and Serbian diaspora engagement

I would like to invite you to take part in my research project investigating language, identity and Serbian diaspora engagement, with a specific focus on the UK communities. It will examine the role of language in shaping identity, and the many ways of being Serb or Serbian that exist in the UK. Connected to this, it will explore the different reasons for choosing to maintain the Serbian language in families living in the UK. I want to combine personal opinions on the importance of language and the resources already available with official responses, to see where/whether these ideas overlap.

The reasons for choosing the Serbian language are diverse. The different waves of migration, points of origin, and forms of the language make it a very complex and varied case study. I am also interested in the Serbian Ministry for Diaspora and Religion's language policies, whether/to what extent they will affect teaching in the UK, and what diaspora opinions on this involvement are.



#### Figure4: Question protocol for interviews with Diaspora Assembly members

1. What does Serbian language mean to you and why is it important that it is maintained amongst the UK diaspora?
2. What is your role in this? Would you like this role to change in any way?
3. What do you think the main challenges to teaching Serbian language in the UK are?
4. Do you think that you have to speak Serbian in order to identify as a Serb (or are there other more important identity factors)? If so, do you have to be fluent?
5. Would the importance of maintaining the language, in your opinion, be different for people depending on their personal history & region of origin, time of departure, whether they are first/second generation Serb etc?
6. Would you like more involvement from Serbia itself?
7. What is your knowledge of Serbian Ministry policies on diaspora language learning?
8. What are the working relationships between diaspora members and the Ministry like? How do you think/hope these working relationships will evolve?
9. Do you think the recent elections in Serbia might affect any discussed plans/policies?
10. Do you think Serbian or UK assistance/recognition is more important? i.e. Would you like to see the reintroduction of a Serbian GCSE and A Level, or would some sort of formal recognition/syllabus from Serbia itself be more important? Or are neither important, if it is more of an identity question?
11. Why do you think language maintenance in the diaspora would benefit Serbia itself?
12. What do you think motivates parents to send their children to a school rather than teaching the language at home? What are the benefits of formal schooling?
13. Are you pleased with the current number of children in the diaspora learning Serbian in a school environment? If not, how do you think this could be promoted or improved?
14. Are any countries doing better than the UK in terms of structured Serbian language teaching amongst the diaspora? If so, how?
15. Is there much coordination on language teaching between different diaspora groups i.e. the US, UK, Australia, Germany etc?
16. Do you think it's more important for language initiatives to come from diasporas themselves than Serbia?
17. Do you think the numbers learning Serbian in a school environment will improve or worsen as the number of second/third/fourth generation Serbs (i.e. not born in Serbia and maybe not even born to parents who were born in Serbia) increases? Is this a problem in your



## Figure5: Question protocol for parental interviews

Can you explain to me a bit of the context of your connection to the Serbian language?

- ! First/second/third generation Serb/Serbian?
- ! Serb or Serbian?
- ! Context of departure
- ! Possibility of return?
- ! Ongoing engagement with Serbia or other parts of former Yugoslavia?

What role does Serbian play for you now that you are in the UK?

- ! Family communication?
- ! Business?
- ! Religion?
- ! Some core essence of identity?
- ! Cultural interest?

Why is it important to you that the language is maintained in your family?

Do you think that you have to speak Serbian in order to identify as a Serb (or are there other more important identity factors)? If so, do you have to be fluent?

What are your hopes for your children in terms of language? Do you expect them to be/are they already fluent? Do you just want them to be able to communicate easily in Serbian?

Are you satisfied with the availability/quality of Serbian language teaching in the UK/your local area?

How would you like it to improve or is this irrelevant to you (if you teach your children at home)?

Do you think Serbian or UK assistance/recognition is more important? i.e. Would you like to see the reintroduction of a Serbian GCSE and A Level, or would some sort of formal recognition/syllabus from Serbia itself be more important? Or are neither important, if it is more of an identity question?

How would you feel about involvement from the Serbian Ministry for Diaspora in the structuring/resourcing of language teaching in the UK?

## Figure 6:TranscriptionExtract

Vesna (Teacher)16/05/12

### Key

É = unclear on recording

(?) = unclear

### Transcript

V: YES (emphatic). Because, you know, I told them - some of the parents ð that we are. Anyway, it is far away, you know. We have to do a lot of things to get permission to have GCSE because it's not up to us, you know. We have to programme but we need verification and everything, you know, in the government. And then we'll see. But they are interested (the parents). And yes, I do notice that. They even happy for their children if we can make the programme for all of them. It's hard work anyway. Because now, you know, we try to connect Serbian with English because here they got, you know, it's perfected system, English as additional language and we start to follow their system and then somehow find a way for the Serbian language. Which is not hard because for all of the languages, you need the same things.

M: Do you find that a lot of the parents are people who have come over from Serbia or are they people who are, I don't know, maybe they're second generation themselves?

V: Yes, most of them are second generation, to be honest. And we've got parents, you know, who their parents teach them Serbian but they've been born here. Their mother tongue is English, not Serbian. They speak some Serbian but not very well. And for them, it's hard to teach. But surprisingly we got some children, I got, and they're brother and sister and they didn't speak a lot. Nothing much at all, nothing. And then they will start to speak some Serbian to each other. But to be honest, if we want our children to speak Serbian, they have to practice at home. You know, because in 2 hours, it's not too many.

M: But, I mean, it's good that there's still that momentum. People, like, even when they're born here

V: Yes, they're interested. And I don't know that, Because a lot of people her, not just Serbian people, not just second generation, a lot of foreign people, they want to learn Serbian. And I don't know why

(Brief conversation about my learning Serbian)

É and somehow there starts to be interest in the language. I'm happy. And finally, I think our country, Serbia, is going to help us. Because in the past, no, no, nothing. Because I don't know if you know or not, in Serbia we haven't got European framework for Serbian language yet. And they do now something É one for adults. But they don't have anything for children. They now just start to do something. We will see also the Faculty of Education in Serbia. They promise us, to make together with us, some programme in the summer. We will see. Because of that, we really rush to make or own then to see, you know, how they will respond. You know in the beginning, we will for sure make some mistakes but we just need to try. Because probably you know, for all diaspora people ð one part GCSE/one part for the small children (?)



## Figure7: Participant Tables

### Details of parents interviewed

Name	Where are they from
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migration



#### Details of teachers interviewed

Name	School	Where are they from?	How long in the UK?
Vesna	Serbian Society School	Serbia	4 years
Marta	Bedford School	Montenegrin parents but raised in Belgrade, Serbia	3 years
Danica	Church School	Central Serbia	35 years
Darko	SSEES	Trebinje, Hercegovina (RSK)	20 years

#### Details of officials interviewed

Name	Role/Organisation	Where are they from?
Marina Markovi!	Serbian Embassy	Serbia
Olga Stanojlovi!	Serbian Society	British-born Serb
Mirjana Lazi!	UK Representative to the Diaspora Assembly	Serbia
Father Dragan	Head Priest, Church of St Sava, London	East Serbia
Stan Smiljani!	Briti! Editor and Organiser of the Bedford Community School	British-born Serb
Milos Stefanovic	UK Representative to the Diaspora Assembly	Serbia
Father Milan	Orthodox Priest	Serbia

## Figure 8: Transcription Codes

Transcription Codes	Parent	Teacher/Official	Total
Differing Levels		2	2
Programme Practicalities	1	5	6
Resourcing Difficulties		5	5

British Education		4	4
Double Standards		2	2
Benefit Society		2	2
Multiculturalism	3	2	5
Cultural Relations	5	1	6
Church + Education	1	1	2
Anti -Yugoslav	1	1	2
Career Prospects	4	5	9
Worse Abroad	1	1	2
Community Comparisons	3	4	7
British Government		2	2
School Dreams		3	3
Political Context	2	5	7
Negative about Serbian Assistance	4	6	10
Two Serbs Three Opinions	2	4	6
Lack of Structure	2	5	7
Minority Language Position	1	3	4
Online Technology Benefits		2	2
Coordination Routes		3	3
Family Ties	4	2	6
Serbian Ties		1	1
Brain Drain	1	2	3
Self-Organisation	1	3	4
Recognition	3	3	6
Church Conflicts	1	3	4
Inter -Diaspora Communication		2	2
Government Focus		1	1
Mixed Marriages	2	3	5
Reasons for Migrating		1	1
No Future		1	1
Serbian Financial Ties		1	1
Poor Standards		1	1
Migration Waves	3	3	6
Complex Identity	1	1	2
Social Aspect	5	1	6
Momentum		1	1
Attitudes in Serbia	4	1	5
Opposition to Outsiders		1	1
Same Everywhere		1	1
Inter -Community Marriage	2		2
No Home (to go back to)	3		3
Wasted Opportunities	3		3
Explore/Embrace Identity	3	1	4
No English (at home)	2		2
Context -Dependent Identity	1		1
Benefit Serb(ian) Parents	3		3
Old Fashioned Diaspora Values	1		1
Other Identity Factors	2	1	3
Benefits of Religion	1	1	2

